



## A LONG TABLE LAUNCH FOR THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE FOODIE AWARDS THE FOOD & DRINK AWARDS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

**April 2022:** The Gloucestershire Foodie Awards, sponsored by Visit Gloucestershire, launched with an evening event at the Long Table in Stroud, Gloucestershire, on Tuesday, 26 April 2022.

The evening, attended by a diverse range of food, drink, and hospitality businesses, with some incredible stories, was a relaxed evening of conversation, business, and community. Maisie, Head Chef at The Long Table, produced an excellent Dahl, pickles and delicious bread baked in house, and with no seating plan, all the attendees sat down at long tables and began to chat.

The ethos of The Long Table, a Community Interest Company (CIC), is in four parts: Community resilience, food resilience, community canteen, training, and work opportunities. The Foodie Awards champions the Pay As You Can initiative where all food from **The Long Table kitchen is served Pay As You Can**. If you can afford to pay **£6** for each meal, please do, however, If you are struggling and need a free meal, the Long Table is glad to be there with meals that have been paid forward by the community ready for anyone who needs it. Contributions over **£6** help other people eat the same great food for less.

Tom Herbert of the Long Table explained, "It is about rising and growing through awareness. We receive produce that is left over - we never know what we are going to get! We create delicious bowls of food with a Pay as you Can philosophy and introduce a Forward pay scheme. If you can pay, please do, and if you can't, no problem. The aim is to sit down, enjoy a good bowl of food, and start chatting with who you are next to. I've grown up sitting down to eat a nutritious meal and chatting, but so many people can't – whether they can't afford or are on their own, or both. In addition, we offer apprenticeships and a seed bank – pick up a packet, take it home and grow!"

Jonathan Smith, Foodie Awards Founder, and Director, echoed, "And that's why we are proud to support the Long Table. Our ethos at The Gloucestershire Foodie Awards is supporting the food, drinks, and hospitality community, and initiatives to become more sustainable through creating a like-minded community – the Foodie Awards want to make a real difference through community."

Steve Gardner-Collins, Director and Chair at Visit Gloucestershire, spoke on the evening, "I had a speech prepared, which I will need to relate as part of my job, but I'm going to put that aside for now. This evening has touched me. Adopting two children whose background with food is challenging and presents itself daily as a reoccurring problem, what the Long Table stands for, and the Gloucestershire Foodie Awards supporting this wonderful CIC business have blown me away. It's a note to all. We are delighted to be the headline sponsor."

Jonathan continued, "As well as launching the Gloucestershire Foodie Awards, we want to encourage everyone to purchase an additional 'One Meal' Coin as part of the Pay Forward scheme and reach the target of an 1000 additional meals to offer 1000 people, who can't afford to pay, a nutritious bowl of food. We are delighted to support The Long Table."

Jonathan concluded, "We have launched in Gloucestershire! The awards are free to enter, and we call out to all food, drink, and hospitality businesses to enter. **Entries will close on 2 Sept 2022**. We are also seeking industry-led judges and further sponsorship to support initiatives and the Long Table ethos. Please just get in touch. Thank you."

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